

## **Highlights: mHealth survey data on unmarried adolescents**

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### **Highlights:**

1. About (94%, 96%) and (96%, 92%) (boys, girls) from Shahpur and Igatpuri, respectively could read and write. 82%-88% study subjects had either secondary or higher secondary education, and 4% from Igatpuri had no education.
2. 68% boys were currently attending full-time school in Shahpur and Igatpuri. The proportion of girls attending full-time school was 82% and 66%, respectively from Shahpur and Igatpuri. The age range when the school was left varied from 4-19 years (younger in Shahpur). Most schools were for boys and girls combined.
3. The proportions of (boys, girls) who have worked for pay were (26%, 12%), and (24%, 36%), from Shahpur and Igatpuri. The age when they started working for pay varied from 9 to 19 years. Out of these, (62%, 50%), and (92%, 72%) (boys, girls) from Shahpur and Igatpuri were currently working for pay. The number of hours of work per week was not understood correctly (varied from 3 to 84 hours per week), and weekly wages varied from INR 100-3150.
4. Most of the study subjects from Igatpuri were Hindu, while about 86% from Shahpur were Hindu and the rest were either Muslim or Buddhist.
5. In both study areas, about 70% women belonged to schedule tribe while only 10% men from Shahpur belonged to schedule tribe and 78% men from Igatpuri were in this caste category. 6-42% study subjects belonged to other backward class. 36% men from Shahpur belonged to schedule caste.
6. 75-95% study subjects had at least one mobile phone.
7. 60% boys as against 10% girls always had mobile phone with them. About 40% girls said that they never get to use the phone.
8. Mobile phone was used either to call friends or relatives. The average monthly bill varied from INR 9 to 5000. The higher proportions were for INR 50, 100, 200.
9. Majority of study subjects were not aware of any call centre in their regions.
10. About 90% girls and 70% boys thought that a toll free facility for health counselling is a good idea, and youngsters like them would call for health related advice and also about changes occurring in their bodies.
11. About 40% and 60% study subjects visited a doctor in the last 12 months from Shahpur and Igatpuri, respectively. Most of them, except girls from Shahpur saw posters related to health and family planning. Except girls from Shahpur, they were also comfortable asking questions during their visits, and got satisfactory answers. The boys were mostly alone with the doctors while girls were not.
12. The most important source of information about the growth-related issues has been either the school teacher (60-70%) or friends (15-25%) for boys and the school teachers (for about 70% girls in Shahpur, and 20% in Igatpuri) or mothers (for more than 50% in Igatpuri, and 20% in Shahpur) for girls.
13. Shahpur adolescents (50% boys and 80% girls) did attend classes on sexual and reproductive system, and on relationships between boys and girls. This proportion was much lower in Igatpuri (30% boys and 40% girls).
14. Questions related to sex and reproductions had mixed responses, most answering either yes or do not know. Responses to the questions i) A woman can get pregnant on the very first time that she has sexual intercourse, were do not know (48-86%) and yes (6-28%), ii) Masturbation causes weakness in the body, (35-50% boys said yes, and 20% boys from Shahpur said no), and most girls said they do not know.
15. All study subjects wanted to have children (mostly two) in the future, and they wanted a boy and a girls child.

16. To the question about visiting a doctor, 50%-70% boys and girls (from Igatpuri) said it would be easy to visit a doctor for intimate problems, while 80% girls from Igatpuri said it would be difficult.
17. Number of friends who have had intimate relationship produce two main responses; none and not sure/do not know. This is a sensitive question and adolescents were not ready to reveal about intimate relationship of their friends.
18. About the contraceptive methods, i) pill was not known to about 60% subjects and only 20-30% knew from where to obtain it, ii) injection was not familiar to most, iii) condoms were not known to 50% boys and 90% girls, the place from where one can obtain condom was known only to 25% boys and no girls, iv) emergency contraceptive pills were not known, v) withdrawal and other methods were also not known.
19. Out of IUD, and sterilization, female sterilization was the one which was heard about (88% and 70% girls, and 30% and 70% boys, respectively from Shahpur and Igatpruri).
20. About 50% girls and 70% boys (from Igatpuri) thought that pills was the most suitable method for young people, the remaining mostly said they did not know.
21. A question about knowing anyone who have used any of the methods, 56% girls from Shahpur (only 12% from Igatpuri) said they have known someone who used female sterilization, and knowledge of condom use by someone was given by 26% boys from Shahpur.
22. 60% boys and 50% girls had heard about HIV or AIDS. However, only 40% (only 6% girls from Igatpuri) had heard about other sexually transmitted diseases.
23. About 80% study subjects answered either no or do not know to the questions about signs or symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases.
24. The place from where one can obtain treatment for intimate problems were the government hospital (90% boys and 70% girls answered this) or private doctor (26% boys and 60% girls from Igatpuri while only 14% subjects from Shahpur).
25. To the questions regarding signs and symptoms among boys, the only sign which was pointed out by boys (18% from Shahpur and 2% from Igatpuri) was night fall or wet dreams. Moreover, only half the boys said they had experienced none of the symptoms which were listed, and this is contradicting the answers to the specific symptoms (the remaining 50% must have experienced some or the other symptoms or the question was not understood correctly). Girls did not respond positively to any of the signs and symptoms that were listed and 70% girls said they had experienced none of the listed symptoms.
26. A question on talking about intimate problems, about 80% boys and 70% girls said they did not have any problems while 4% boys, and 14% and 4% girls from Shahpur and Igatpuri said they did talk about their problems to someone.
27. About 40-50% boys said they had seen a condom while only 8% and 2% girls from Shahpur and Igatpuri had seen it. Only 24% boys said they knew someone who had used condom but none of the girls knew. Use of condom to prevent pregnancy received mixed response from boys, 50% agreeing while 50% not agreeing, and most girls did not know. When it comes to use of condom more than once, most girls did not agree that it could be used more than once while boys had mixed responses. About 60% boys from Shahpur and 34% from Igatpuri felt that it would be embarrassing for someone like him to obtain condom, while almost 90% girls did not agree to this. Use of condom as a protection against sexually transmitted diseases was known among 50% boys while almost all girls did not know about it. About 70% boys agreed that they would be embarrassed to get information on the use of condom and intimate relationship by phone, while most girls disagreed to this.
28. Age at menarche ranged from 12 to 18 years with median (and also mean) age at 14 years. Two most widely used protection during menstrual period were old cloth and branded sanitary napkins. The place of buying sanitary napkins was a chemist shop in Shahpur while in addition to this, super market and village shop in Igatpuri. Most girls in Shahpur said they spend INR 5 every month on sanitary napkins while girls from Igatpuri had a wide range of

INR 1 to 5. About 30% girls said that the amount spent on the purchase of sanitary napkins was affordable. Among those who did not use sanitary napkins said that they were too expensive (45% girls), not willing to use (16%), not known (17% and 8% from Shahpur and Igatpuri, respectively), not locally available (12% and 32 % from Shahpur and Igatpuri). 80% girls were told about menstruation by their mothers, and other sources were close female relative, friend health worker, and no one.